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Is Your Name Smith?

Edith K. Dunton



THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

Successful Rural Plays

A Strong List From Which to Select Your
Next Play

FARM FOLKS. A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. For five male and six female characters. Time of playing, two hours and a half. One simple exterior, two easy interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Flora Goodwin, a farmer's daughter, is engaged to Philip Burleigh, a young New Yorker. Philip's mother wants him to marry a society woman, and by falsehoods makes Flora believe Philip does not love her. Dave Weston, who wants Flora himself, helps the deception by intercepting a letter from Philip to Flora. She agrees to marry Dave, but on the eve of their marriage Dave confesses, Philip learns the truth, and he and Flora are reunited. It is a simple plot, but full of speeches and situations that sway an audience alternately to tears and to laughter.

HOME TIES. A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. Characters, four male, five female. Plays two hours and a half. Scene, a simple interior—same for all four acts. Costumes, modern. One of the strongest plays Mr. Tubbs has written. Martin Winn's wife left him when his daughter Ruth was a baby. Harold Vincent, the nephew and adopted son of the man who has wronged Martin, makes love to Ruth Winn. She is also loved by Len Everett, a prosperous young farmer. When Martin discovers who Harold is, he orders him to leave Ruth. Harold, who does not love sincerely, yields. Ruth discovers she loves Len, but thinks she has lost him also. Then he comes back, and Ruth finds her happiness.

THE OLD NEW HAMPSHIRE HOME. A New England Drama in Three Acts, by FRANK DUMONT. For seven males and four females. Time, two hours and a half. Costumes, modern. A play with a strong heart interest and pathos, yet rich in humor. Easy to act and very effective. A rural drama of the "Old Homestead" and "Way Down East" type. Two exterior scenes, one interior, all easy to set. Full of strong situations and delightfully humorous passages. The kind of a play everybody understands and likes.

THE OLD DAIRY HOMESTEAD. A Rural Comedy in Three Acts, by FRANK DUMONT. For five males and four females. Time, two hours. Rural costumes. Scenes rural exterior and interior. An adventurer obtains a large sum of money from a farm house through the intimidation of the farmer's niece, whose husband he claims to be. Her escapes from the wiles of the villain and his female accomplice are both starting and novel.

A WHITE MOUNTAIN BOY. A Strong Melodrama in Five Acts, by CHARLES TOWNSEND. For seven males and four females, and three supers. Time, two hours and twenty minutes. One exterior, three interiors. Costumes easy. The hero, a country lad, twice saves the life of a banker's daughter, which results in their betrothal. A scoundrelly clerk has the banker in his power, but the White Mountain boy finds a way to checkmate his schemes, saves the banker, and wins the girl.

THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

Is Your Name Smith?

A Comedy in One Act

By

EDITH K. DUNTON

*Author of "The Betty Wales Girls
and Mr. Kidd*



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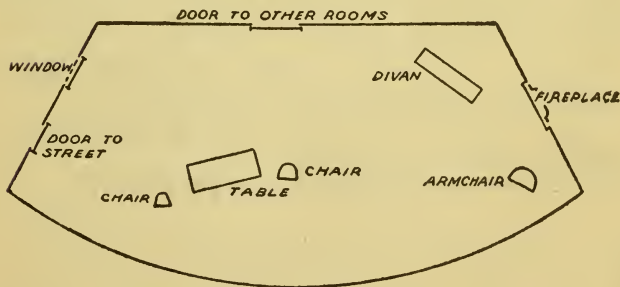
Is Your Name Smith?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

BOB EVANS *Newlywed*
JOHN SMITH..... *Eccentric friend of Bob*
CHARLES AUGUSTUS SMITH. *Vacuum cleaner salesman*
JOE SMITH..... *A plumber*
MICHAEL ANGELO ROMANO, alias JIM SMITH,
An organ grinder
MRS. BOB EVANS..... *Wife of Bob*
MISS JONES-SMITH..... *A book agent*
SADIE PULASKI..... *A Polish maid*

TIME OF PLAYING.—About one hour.

SCENE PLOT



SCENE.—Sitting-room in the Evans apartment.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

BOB EVANS and MRS. BOB EVANS. Newly wed and very blissful. He is big and gay and casual; she is little, very earnest, even soulful, and works for good causes. Bob calls her Molly.

JOHN SMITH. The eccentric friend of Bob Evans; so eccentric that he is sometimes perfectly commonplace.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS SMITH. Checked suit, loud waistcoat, and manner to match. Selling vacuum cleaners in a motor.

MISS JONES-SMITH. Extremely masculine in dress, voice, and manner, selling books for the table and the shelves, from camouflaged receptacles, by refined methods, and in a coy style. (This part might be taken by a man.)

JOE SMITH. A plumber who responds with unbelievable promptness to a lady's signal of distress.

MICHAEL ANGELO ROMANO, alias JIM SMITH. An organ grinder who is so queer himself that he takes other people—even women—quite as a matter of course.

MICHAEL. A monkey, chiefly ornamental. A toy monkey can do all the "work" of the part.

SADIE PULASKI. A Polish maid, generally incompetent.

[Bob Evans may "double" with Joe Smith.]

Is Your Name Smith?

SCENE.—*Sitting-room in the Evans Apartment, in some city such as New Haven. Outside door and window to R.; center back, door to other rooms; fireplace, L. Conventional furnishings (including telephone) very spick and span, and very cozy. TIME.—Noon, to-day.*

(*Enter BOB EVANS in a great hurry, coat on, hat in one hand and a letter in the other.*)

BOB (*calling excitedly*). Molly, I say, Molly!

(*Enter MOLLY in a big apron, wiping a dish.*)

MOLLY. What is it, Bob?

BOB. Letter—special delivery. I met the boy on the stairs. It's from my friend, old John Smith. He is landing to-day, he says—doesn't mention the boat, or tell where he's been. (*Reads from letter.*) Cordially accepts your invitation to come out and spend the night and look you over.

MOLLY. Bob, is he the one who sent us the rugs—the one you said is so queer?

BOB. The same. Don't you remember asking him here? I hope you didn't ask *everybody* who sent us a present.

MOLLY. No! No indeed! I only asked the men I'd never met, who sent us very scrumptious presents, and when you opened them you said, "Good old John!" or "The dear old chap!" or something like that, that sounded as if you were awfully fond of them.

Besides, I never thought they would come right away—before we were settled.

BOB. John Smith would be sure to do the thing you didn't expect. (*Rereads letter.*) I say, Molly, I'm late now for an important appointment. How much have I told you about Smith?

MOLLY. I don't know, Bob. A lot of funny stories, but I've forgotten most of them, I'm afraid. Will he be likely to get here before you do?

BOB. No telling. I'll be back as early as I can, but I've got a frightful afternoon ahead of me. Now, Molly, listen; listen hard. A heap depends upon you, little girl. You understand Smith's a queer duck, but he's done a lot for me and I'm awfully fond of him. Now, anybody—*anybody* who comes to the house this afternoon may be Smith.

MOLLY. Why, of course, Bob. That's mere common sense. But won't he say he's Mr. Smith and that he's come to visit us?

BOB. Probably he will eventually, if you give him a good chance. The fact is, Molly, he's a *very* queer fellow!

MOLLY. You've said that four times, Bob. It's getting on my nerves. How is he queer? Is he crazy? And what do you want me to do about it?

BOB. I want you to realize that he's a crank on democracy. You must recognize him when he appears and treat him white, no matter how he looks—how he's dressed, I mean—or what he does. If I come home and find that Smith's gone off peeved before I get here, I shall feel badly out of luck.

MOLLY (*stiffly*). I can't see that I shall be to blame. I'm not responsible for his queerness.

BOB. Now, Molly, listen. You don't understand. This is the way of it: my friend Smith is likely to come here this afternoon looking like a tramp, or a sewing-machine agent, or a sheep herder, or a Mohammedan fakir, or a tin peddler—he has been all of those things, and a lot more. I *think* he would tell you that his name was Smith, but if you acted rattled, or annoyed,

or ashamed, or embarrassed at whatever queer disguise he happens to appear in, it will be all off between you and Smith. He'll bolt, and he may not turn up again for years.

MOLLY. Gracious, Bob! I just happened to think—there's a committee meeting for our college drive this afternoon at three o'clock. What if he comes while I'm away?

BOB. Don't be away. Cut your meeting, little girl. Cut it cold. Stick right around this ranch until I get back.

MOLLY. The girls will be awfully mad at me!

BOB. Never you mind. That drive's for money, isn't it?

MOLLY (*astonished*). Why, yes—of course it is, Bob.

BOB. All right. And your college is named Smith, isn't it? Well, then, I'll bank on my friend Smith to pay the college liberally for your taking an afternoon off from committee work. Maybe he'd even think you were worth a yellow-back.

MOLLY (*delightedly*). Oh, Bob! Do you really think he'll give us something?

BOB. Sure, if you get a good start with him. Giving away his money is one of the best things Smith does.

MOLLY. How does he look, Bob? How old is he? How tall is he? What's the color of his hair and his eyes?

BOB. Now you're talking! Smith's about fifty—he was my dad's college chum, you know. Took a shine to me when I was a kid, because I shared his taste for old clothes and queer adventures. Gee, but we had a great time that summer I was sixteen and we went sheep-herding out in Browne's Park!

MOLLY. How tall is he, Bob?

BOB. Pretty near six feet, I should say. Hair—oh, the usual color. Eyes—oh, nice eyes, rather extra sharp. I don't know the color of anybody's eyes but yours, Molly. Good-bye, dearest!

MOLLY. Good-bye, dear! I'll do my very best to make Mr. Smith like me—for your sake, not for the "yellow-back." Come back just as early as you can.

BOB (*on the stairs, calls back*). You bet I will.

(*Exits.*)

(MOLLY picks up the dish which she has laid on the table, surveys the room, runs her finger along the table for dust, wipes it off with a corner of her apron, straightens some pillows, exits. Bell rings. Silence. Rings again very loudly. Enter MOLLY breathless, without apron, very much frightened. Goes to the door. Enter CHARLES AUGUSTUS SMITH, fat, pompous, loudly dressed, beaming smile. MOLLY has expected something much queerer, but upon inspection decides that CHARLES AUGUSTUS SMITH is on the whole queer enough to be her husband's eccentric friend.)

MOLLY. Good-afternoon!

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Good-afternoon, Mrs.—er ——

MOLLY (*helpfully*). Evans—and you're Mr. Smith?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Good guess, little one!

MOLLY (*taken aback, but, resolved to get the right start mentioned by BOB, puts out her hand*). I am so glad to see you! Bob is coming back just as soon as he can. He is awfully busy just now, poor boy.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Fighting the H. C. of L., I suppose. Well, as far as I'm concerned, let him fight it! It's you I really wanted to see, Mrs. Evans.

MOLLY (*shy and embarrassed*). Please don't look at me so hard, Mr. Smith. Of course, I know I'm not half good enough for Bob. Won't you sit down? Where is your bag?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. E-er—why, out in the car, naturally. I say, Mrs. Evans, you certainly keep a fellow moving—and guessing. Who told you I was coming to see you this afternoon?

MOLLY. Why, Bob told me, of course, Mr. Smith.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. The deuce he did! I—er—

er—never meant him to, Mrs. Evans. What more did he tell you?

MOLLY (*blushing guiltily*). Why—oh, nothing, Mr. Smith, except that I was to make you feel at home until he came. He's very fond of you, you see, and very anxious to have you enjoy your first visit to us.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Well, I'll tell the world that he's getting his wish to a "t." I've seldom felt as much at home as I do at the moment. Just one thing lacking——

MOLLY. Is it some luncheon perhaps? We have ours rather early——

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Not luncheon, Mrs. Evans. I dine at noon—and I've dined. What I meant was—(*sententious pause; points to a child's picture on the table*) where are the kiddies?

MOLLY (*rising abruptly*). Don't you want to see how pretty your rugs look, Mr. Smith—the ones you sent us when we were *married last month*? There is one—(*points at a rug in front of the fireplace; holds open center back door*) and there's the other. Of course the big one is far too splendid for our little dining-room, but that's where we seemed to need it most.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Gee, Mrs. Evans, I've got an *awfully* poor memory! Did Bob tell you that, too, perhaps? I certainly never expected to see anything I gave to anybody look as elegant as that dining-room rug does.

MOLLY (*mollified*). It *is* a perfect beauty. Will you excuse me just a minute, Mr. Smith? You see, I haven't any maid, just a woman who comes in. While I am out in the kitchen, why don't you go and get your bag?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. My, but it's a businesslike little lady! Did Bob tell you what was in my bag?

MOLLY. No; why should he?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Not a reason in the world except that Bob's a queer fellow—a *very* queer fellow—and I never can tell what he will say or do.

MOLLY. Why—how funny! That's exactly what he says about you.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. The deuce he does! Well, I'll go get my bag and *we'll see* what's in it!

(*Exit.*)

MOLLY (*surveys the rug by the fire admiringly*). I'm glad Mr. Smith's taste in rugs is better than Bob's father's taste in college chums. Horrid thing! But Bob's not to blame. It's years since he's seen much of Mr. Smith. (*Looks at the clock on the mantel.*) Three o'clock! Bob certainly won't be here before five. Well, I'll do my best. (*Exit. Enter CHARLES AUGUSTUS, carrying a vacuum cleaner in a brown denim case. Surveys the empty room, smiling unctuously, unwraps the vacuum cleaner, attaches it to a light, and starts it on the oriental rug by the fireplace. Enter MOLLY, running.*) Oh, it's you! I was frightened to death when I heard that noise. Oh, please don't try it on that rug! Why, I always brush that myself; I'm so afraid something will happen to it.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*crooks his knee and switches vacuum brush to his trouser leg*). Calm yourself, little one! With clothes skied where they are and moving up, would I take a chance on my only suit?

MOLLY. According to Bob, you could take the chance a whole lot better than most people, Mr. Smith.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. That shows how little Bob knows about the way the war knocked the top off the vacuum cleaner business.

MOLLY. I don't think Bob knows what business you are in now, Mr. Smith.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. He don't! I'm surprised! I thought Bob knew all about me.

MOLLY. Well, in a way, of course, he does. But he naturally talks to me most about the things he cares most about. He's always telling about that summer you spent together in Wyoming—or was it Colorado? Were you as crazy about sheep herding as he was?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Well—that is—yes, it pretty nearly *made me* crazy.

MOLLY. Now, that's just how it seemed to me! There was such a lot of burned bacon and tin cans in Bob's stories, and the sheep got up and baa'd so early in the morning. What time was it they used to begin?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Well, now, let me see—was it standard time or daylight saving? Well, it must have been daylight saving, because I remember we used to throw tin cans at them, hoping they'd drop off again.

MOLLY. That's something Bob never told me. Did they eat the cans?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Well, really I can't say. I suppose so. They say goats do.

MOLLY. Did you ever try it again?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Try what?

MOLLY. Why, sheep herding, of course.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*patronizingly*). Do I look like a sheep herder?

MOLLY. Why, of course not, because you're selling vacuum cleaners now. You don't look like a Moham-medan fakir either.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Why on earth should I? I never even saw one.

MOLLY. Oh, were you the only one around when you did that?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Wh—yes—you bet I was! I always take pains to be the only one around, when I can, especially — (*Bell rings violently.*)

MOLLY. Oh, dear! It's probably some one from that committee. I haven't 'phoned them. Excuse me one moment, please, Mr. Smith.

(*Opens door. Enter SADIE PULASKI.*)

SADIE. Marie, vat is my cousine, she can't come—she say you take me this day. I no find back stair.

MOLLY. Oh, that's all right, but I especially need Marie to-day! (*Lowers her voice.*) I've got company for dinner. What's the matter with Marie?

SADIE. Marie, she go to one wedding.

MOLLY (*in consternation*). You don't mean she's being *married* to-day?

SADIE. Oh, no! She go dance at her cousine's wedding.

MOLLY. Oh, how annoying! Couldn't you—what's your name?

SADIE. Sadie Pulaski.

MOLLY. Well, Sadie, I'll pay you the same as if you worked here if you'll go find Marie. Tell her I need her awfully to-day. Then you bring her back here and get your money.

SADIE. No, sir, I work here, get de money. I no like weddings. Dey dance. Too much hurry up—too much hug. I get my money here.

MOLLY. Can you cook?

SADIE (*shrugs*). I can do *some*.

MOLLY. Are you a trained waitress?

SADIE. Wot you say?

MOLLY (*glancing desperately at SMITH*). Of course, you aren't. Well, go out to the kitchen and take your things off—you might finish washing the luncheon dishes, and then I'll come and show you what to do next.

SADIE. Aw right, ma'am.

(*Exit.*)

MOLLY (*trying to be cheerful*). Don't worry about your dinner, Mr. Smith. She can't cook, I'm sure, but I can. At least Bob thinks so.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. And as for the trained waitress part of it, we can do our own stretching. Those cheap-boarding-house methods are getting to be fashionable in the best society nowadays, I'm told.

(*Sound of crashing china outside.*)

MOLLY. Oh, dear! (*Runs out.*)

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*who has risen at her exit, sinks into a chair exhausted—improvises*).

To stay or not to stay, that is the question,
Whether 'tis better on the whole to sell her

A sweeper vac. to clean her pretty nest with,
Or to keep up the mystery she's woven
And by departing save it —

(Enter MOLLY.)

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Was the damage heavy?

MOLLY. All the dishes we used for luncheon. She knocked the trayful off the table before she'd even started to wash them. I wanted to tell her to go, but she was crying as it was, so I didn't say anything. (*Sound of running water outside, then a scream.*) Now what? (*Rushes out again.*)

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Looks to me as if it would be safer for us all to retreat. That girl is liable to throw a bomb.

MOLLY (*outside*). But I don't see why you turned the water on to wash dishes, when the dishes were all broken to begin with. Well, there's nothing to do now but let it run until the plumber comes. I'll telephone him at once. (*Enter MOLLY.*) She turned the hot water faucet on so hard that she pulled the top off, and it's running *streams*. I only hope it doesn't overflow the sink before I can get a plumber here. Such an afternoon! Oh, Mr. Smith, you don't know how sorry I am! Bob will be furious when he hears about it. (*Consults directory.*) P-1—oh, it won't be there! I don't know the name of any plumber in this town!

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Ask Information; she'll help you out. (*MOLLY picks up receiver.*) Better yet—look under Smith. It's a common name, you know, and I've noticed that lots of them run to plumbing.

MOLLY (*drops receiver and consults book again*). Oh, dear, they're all just plain street and number. No, here's G. S. Smith, wall paper and paint. I could ask him. Oh, there's a Joe Smith in hardware—he's probably a plumber, too. (*Wail from kitchen.*) Oh, Mr. Smith, would you 'phone him? Tell him to come *quick!*

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Sure, I'll 'phone him for you. (*Exit MOLLY.*) Four-four Highland. Right oh!

Hello! Hello! That you, Joe Smith? The sweetest little lady in the world is in a peck of trouble over a busted water-tap and wants you to—oh, well, man, we'll *drown* if you don't! Ellis? We've tried him; he's gone to his grandmother's funeral or something of the sort. Gosh, no! Smith's the name. Have a heart, man, and a little family feeling. Right around the corner—Apartment C, the Kennington. You have a blanket contract with the owner to keep the place in repair? Well, hop to it, man, and save yourself a peck of trouble. Pails? Sure, we'll fix some up. Turn off the water? Well, I never did, but I'll make the effort. So long, Brother Smith. (*Hangs up receiver. Reaches for vacuum cleaner, puts it in case, opens door and deposits it in hall.*) Here's your exit cue, C. A. (*Calls.*) Mrs. Evans! Mrs. Evans! One minute, please!

(*Enter MOLLY in long apron, wet cloth in her hand.*)

MOLLY. That girl was having hysterics. And now the sink's full, and I'm fixing pails to catch the overflow.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Good for you, little girl! The plumber's advice to a dot! But he also suggests turning off the water in the basement—with a thing called a monkey-wrench. Got any such animal?

MOLLY (*considers*). Oh, I know. (*Darts off.*)

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*looks at water*). Delay is dangerous, but one must play fair with the little lady.

(*Enter MOLLY.*)

MOLLY. Here! Do you know how it works? I haven't an idea, but men generally —

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*grabbing it*). Sure, I know. No time to lose. Count on me, little one.

MOLLY. I'm so sorry to trouble you.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Don't mention it. Delighted, I'm sure. Easier than many other things you *might* have asked of me.

(*Exit, almost knocking down JOE SMITH, plumber, in the door.*)

JOE SMITH (*big and calm and comforting, but on the job*). Well, where's your break, ma'am?

MOLLY. Wh-wh-at, are you here already? I can't see how you did it. I've got the pails fixed and found the monkey-wrench, and Mr. Smith has just gone down —

(*JOE SMITH strides silently back to kitchen.*)

JOE SMITH (*reënters*). Well! You empty them pails, Mrs. Smith, and I'll go and turn off the water and tell your husband what I think of his strong-arm tactics on that tap.

MOLLY. Wait! Wait, Mr. Smith. He isn't my husband, and he didn't break the faucet, and he went out the other way.

JOE SMITH (*sticks head in center back door*). Ain't y'r husband down turnin' off the water?

MOLLY. No—yes. That is, Mr. Smith isn't my husband. He's a friend of my husband. At least, I think so. I'm Mrs. Evans—Mrs. Robert Evans.

JOE SMITH (*calm but decisive*). Your friend Smith is a—a — Where is that wrench?

MOLLY. I told you Mr. Smith took it. He went out the hall door, down to the basement, I suppose.

JOE SMITH. Thanks, ma'am. (*Vanishes.*)

(*Enter SADIE.*)

SADIE. The water he stop to go.

MOLLY. Thank goodness. Of course Mr. Smith would know how to stop it! A man who's done all kinds of things all over the world would know all about turning off water in a cellar. Poor man! He must be quite worn out. I wonder if he likes tea. Sadie, put on some water to boil—just a little in the bottom of the kettle. I want tea right away quick. And toast some bread. Cut it thin, and butter it. You understand?

SADIE. Yes sir, I go do.

(*Exit SADIE.*)

(MOLLY *sinks down in a chair wearily, but in a minute is erect again.*)

MOLLY. I'd forgotten dinner! That girl can peel potatoes, and the rest will have to wait till Bob comes. If we have tea, dinner can be late. Oh, dear, I must telephone Ethel why I cut the committee meeting! (*Moves to 'phone.*) I do not see how that plumber got here so soon. They *never* do.

(JOE SMITH'S *head in door.*)

JOE SMITH (*meaningly*). If you know where your husband is (MOLLY *jumps up anxiously*), you'd better go and tell him to return the monkey-wrench. The water's off. He ain't to be seen in the basement.

(*Faint tune from street organ heard outside.*)

MOLLY. How many times must I tell you, Mr. Smith, that Mr. Smith—oh, dear, the one that took the monkey-wrench and went to turn off the water—isn't my husband? He's a friend of my husband, who happens to be visiting us. (*Looks around and suddenly misses the vacuum cleaner.*) Why, how funny, the vacuum cleaner is gone too! Did you take the vacuum cleaner, Mr. Smith?

JOE SMITH (*thunderously*). No, ma'am! I came to mend a faucet. (*Disappears.*)

MOLLY. Sadie! (*Enter SADIE.*) Sadie, did you take a vacuum cleaner that was standing here on the floor?

SADIE. Wot, ma'am? No, I take nuthin' at all. The water he boil, ma'am.

MOLLY. Sadie, you *must* have put that vacuum cleaner somewhere. You know what I mean. Not take away—not steal—put in closet to make the room look neat.

SADIE (*sulkily*). I no steal; I no take; I no tidy up. You tell me wash dishes—I break, so I not wash. You tell me to boil water; he boil. (*Flounces out.*) That's all I do.

(*Exit.*)

MOLLY (*goes out through door, comes back, looks behind couch, opens hall door, looks out there*). It isn't here and he never brought in his bag, and the car—(*goes to window*) yes, the car's gone. (*Opens hall door once more, comes back with wrench.*) He never went to the basement. He never tried to turn off the water. Either he's gone off mad, as Bob said he would do if things didn't go right, or he isn't Bob's Mr. Smith. Oh, I hope he wasn't! I didn't like him at all. I declare, as I think it over, I believe he wasn't the right one! (*Bell rings. MOLLY snatches off apron, throws it through the door, answers bell. Enter MISS JONES-SMITH.*) Goo-good-afternoon, Mrs. —

MISS JONES-SMITH (*deep bass voice*). Miss Jones-Smith. Lovely day, isn't it?

MOLLY. Is it? I hadn't noticed. I've been in all the afternoon —

MISS JONES-SMITH (*smiling*). Working hard to keep your little nest cozy and attractive?

MOLLY (*snappily*). Not exactly. (*Has a thought; sweetly.*) Did you say your name was Smith?

MISS JONES-SMITH. Jones-hyphenated-Smith.

MOLLY. Oh! (*Sits forward and looks at her visitor keenly.*) Did you have a pleasant voyage, Miss Jones-Smith?

MISS JONES-SMITH (*taken aback*). Pleasant voyage! Yes, very, after the first day out. (*Pompously.*) It's a great relief to have the war over. I've missed my Europe so lately! Are you crossing this summer?

MOLLY. Oh, no, we can't do things like that yet. You see Bob has three weeks' vacation, but he has taken a week already, when we were—well, last month he took a week.

MISS JONES-SMITH. Don't mind me, dear! You couldn't hide it if you tried. Newly-wed is written in capital letters all over this place. Have you seen Miss Ethel Hastings lately?

(MOLLY starts in her turn.)

MOLLY. No! There, I've forgotten again to tele-

phone! I had a committee meeting at her house to-day, Miss Jones-Smith, and I couldn't get there.

MISS JONES-SMITH. I thought perhaps it was she who told you about me.

MOLLY (*blankly*). No, Bob told me that you had been abroad. That is, I didn't mean—I'm not sure — By the way, Miss Jones-Smith, did you see anything of a man in an automobile, with a vacuum cleaner, when you came in here?

MISS JONES-SMITH. You mean Charlie Smith? The one they call the "Vac Prince"? Yes, I saw Charlie. Fact is, he brought me up here from the station. Is Charlie a friend of yours, Mrs. Evans?

MOLLY. I've merely met him. Has Mr. Smith been in the vacuum cleaner business long?

MISS JONES-SMITH. He claims to have cut his teeth on a carpet-sweeper, I believe.

MOLLY. *What?*

MISS JONES-SMITH. Oh, that's just Charlie's playful little way of saying that he's grown up with the business. Did he, perhaps, sell you something you didn't want?

MOLLY. No, oh, no! He—I—mistook him for—quite another person.

MISS JONES-SMITH (*slightly embarrassed*). An acquaintance—I see. Charlie'd play up. I hope you haven't mistaken me for that, Mrs. Evans, because I spoke as I did of Miss Hastings. She told me of you, as being another educated beauty-lover like herself. Business brings me here—but I cannot separate business from pleasure in my life. Business takes me to Europe, business brings me to dear little homes like this. I'm thought of in many homes, Mrs. Evans, as the giver of the best thing in the house.

MOLLY (*glancing at rug*). Rugs, you mean, Miss Jones-Smith? (*Playfully*.) Did you ever give two beautiful rugs to people in a "dear little home" like this?

MISS JONES-SMITH (*also playfully*). Did I? That's telling, my dear! (*Opens bead-bag, produces beauti-*

ful blue levant "table-book." Gets up, lays book on MOLLY'S center table.) There! Isn't it the crowning touch? (*Pulls up skirt, opens black sateen bag, produces a set of books in skeleton, sets them up on the mantel-shelf over fireplace.*) Books everywhere! Culture, intelligence, comfort!

(*Stands before the fire imitating a tired man smoking a cigarette, picks out a book, drops into a chair in lounging attitude, and pretends to be immersed in the story.*)

MOLLY (*aside*). Oh, dear! Because I was too easily fooled before, I mustn't be too sure this time—either way. (*Happy thought.*) You must have missed books dreadfully that summer you were herding sheep.

MISS JONES-SMITH (*emerging dramatically from the lure of the tale*). Yes, little wifie, so I did! And I've enjoyed them all the more since, particularly tales of the far places of the East, like this volume of Kipling.

MOLLY. Oh, were you ever a Mohammedan fakir?

MISS JONES-SMITH (*smiling*). You enter wonderfully into the spirit of play, child. You grasp allusions and reply in kind. You must be a great joy to your evidently versatile young husband. Now to business—which clinches pleasure. Which shall it be? A touch of richness and of color, a gleam of poetry, beautifully garbed, for the table, or Kipling, Stevenson, Dickens, Shakespeare, to dream over by the fire?

MOLLY (*completely baffled*). Oh—but you must choose your own gift for us, Miss Jones-Smith. And really you ought not to give us anything else, after those lovely rugs.

MISS JONES-SMITH (*playing safe*). Don't mention them, my dear!

MOLLY (*almost convinced*). Oh, I know! We'll let Bob choose, of course!

MISS JONES-SMITH (*vague again*). Bob?

MOLLY. Don't you call him that?

MISS JONES-SMITH (*still more vague*). Sometimes.

(*Creates a diversion.*) Don't I smell something burning? Is there a pie or a cake, perhaps, cooking for Bob?

MOLLY (*sniffing*). What has that girl done now? Excuse me a minute, please. (*Exit—voice heard outside.*) I should think something *was* burning! Why, Sadie, what do you mean by *cooking* the teakettle?

SADIE. I tell you long time back, water he boil. Den he boil off. Den de kettle she cook. You tell me do so. Toast also I have made.

MOLLY. I forgot all about tea, Sadie. Never mind, it's my fault, not yours. Whatever you do, don't cry. Throw away the toast—or eat it! And put on potatoes to boil for dinner—plenty for four. (*In door.*) You know how?

SADIE. I tink so!

MISS JONES-SMITH (*who has collected her property, and has it in a pile on the table*). I'm afraid I've chosen a bad day for my visit. You might just talk things over with *Bob* and—shall I drop in to-morrow?

MOLLY. Oh, but—*Bob* expects—he's expecting a friend to-night—an old friend, who's done a lot for him.

MISS JONES-SMITH (*who has a heart*). That settles it, my dear! I'm off. That *Polander*, or *Swede*, or whatever she is, that can't boil water and is uncertain about her ability to boil potatoes, needs your guiding hand, I'm sure.

MOLLY. Oh, thank you! I can't tell you how grateful I am!

MISS JONES-SMITH (*scathingly*). Don't speed the parting guest *too* hard, my dear! Good-bye.

(*Exit.*)

MOLLY. Why didn't I ask her right out in the first place? *Of course* *Bob's* friend wouldn't masquerade in petticoats. I'm nervous! Well, who wouldn't be when *Bob's* so anxious to have things go just right? (*Organ heard again outside; MOLLY pirouettes to the tune.*) They've gone just wrong so far. A bad be-

gunning—here's hoping for a good ending. (*Dances again.*) How I love street organs! (*Goes to window, throws out some change.*) There's a monkey! Just my luck to have a monkey come along on my busiest day. Oh, he's climbing up! I can't resist that. (*Runs for more change. Monkey climbs in, or is lifted in, and stands on sill.*) You comical, weird little thing! Here! (*Hands him a penny. Enter JOE SMITH, with his tools. MOLLY does not hear him.*) I'd like to pick you up.

JOE SMITH. You'd better not, ma'am. They often bite.

MOLLY (*jumps*). Goodness! I thought you'd gone long ago.

JOE SMITH. So I did—to the shop to get a new tap. Your strong-armed Polack stripped the screw right off the old one. (*Sees wrench on table.*) Hello, where'd that come from?

MOLLY. I—found it—in the hall. I suppose after you turned the water off—he—Mr. Smith—oh, it was all just a grand mix-up. I can't explain. (*Organ begins again and monkey retreats—or is lifted down.*) There now, he's gone—I don't believe he bites!

JOE SMITH (*severely*). You the wife of young Robert Evans?

MOLLY. Why, y-y-es. Why do you ask, Mr.—er—Smith?

JOE SMITH. Wanted to know, that's all. Goo'day, ma'am.

MOLLY (*resolved on direct action, having found it worked well*). Oh, Mr. Smith, are you a friend of my husband?

JOE SMITH (*meaningly*). I'm a friend of anybody that needs a friend, ma'am. Does he?

MOLLY (*in despair*). Oh, dear! You—you were awfully quick getting here and getting the water turned off, Mr. Smith. You came before I thought you possibly could. I'm ever so much obliged.

JOE SMITH. Next time don't say your name is Smith. It ain't business.

MOLLY. I didn't. I said *your* name was Smith. Isn't it?

JOE SMITH. Has been since a man by that name adopted me when I was six. I was born Washington.

MOLLY (*resolved*). Did you ever herd sheep?

JOE SMITH. I came here to mend a tap, not to discuss my past, ma'am. Good-day.

MOLLY. G-good-day. Thank you. I'm sorry if I asked too many questions. (*Exit plumber.*) Oh! It's been a *horrid* afternoon! Probably he's the one! (*Organ again.*) I don't care. I don't care about the potatoes or the dinner—I'm going to play with that monkey, so now! Bob might have stayed and picked out his own old friend! (*Hangs out of window.*) Oh, please won't you send the monkey up again? Will he bite if I take hold of him?

MICHAEL ANGELO ROMANO (*below; off stage*). I tink so not. He's a nice kind little monkey. You lak him too?

MOLLY. Yes. Will he eat candy?

MICHAEL ANGELO. You bet!

(*Monkey appears on sill.*)

MOLLY. What's his name?

MICHAEL ANGELO. Name of Michael.

MOLLY. Here, Michael.

(*Gives him penny and candy.*)

(*Enter SADIE.*)

SADIE. Potato all boil to bits.

(*Sees monkey, screams, and retreats.*)

MOLLY (*candy box in hand, goes to door to kitchen*). Sadie, you mustn't cry and scream so much! (*SADIE, when door is opened, indulges in an orgy of the forbidden screams.*) Go out on the fire escape, Sadie, and shut the door after you *quick*, and *keep quiet*. (*To monkey.*) Don't mind her, Michael. Here's more

candy and another penny because you paid up Sadie good and plenty for breaking my lovely dishes and ruining my bright new kettle. Here! (*Feeds monkey.*) You'd better pull him back now, Mister Organ Man.

MICHAEL ANGELO. That I cannot! The rope has part company. (*Calls.*) Michael! Michael! (*Exasperated.*) Mike, I say, come down!

(MOLLY pokes monkey, but he sticks on sill.)

MOLLY. I'm afraid you'll have to come up and get him.

MICHAEL ANGELO. A'right. But I cannot make it by the window, alas! I go up by the stairs.

MOLLY (*to monkey*). You nice little thing! I'm glad you wanted to stay with me. I'd like to keep you for a pet. (*Knock, enter organ man, with low bow. Picks up monkey, whose chain has been held by some one off stage, and tucks him under his arm.*) Oh, how do you do! I'm awfully glad to see you! I adore hand-organs just as much as I did when I was a little girl. Silly, isn't it? What a nice old one you have got, with those comical little pictures on it! And how lucky you are to have a monkey! So many organs nowadays don't have them.

MICHAEL ANGELO. Cake without frosting!

MOLLY. Worse than that, apple pie without cheese! Did you bring him from Italy? You're Italian, aren't you?

(*Organ man bows low again.*)

MICHAEL ANGELO. Michael Angelo Romano, at your service. What you think, lady, Roma—Napoli—Sicily—where?

MOLLY. I don't know one kind of Italian from another. Tell me, was it Roma—Napoli—Sicily?

MICHAEL ANGELO (*pulls off cap to which strands of dark hair are fastened, disclosing an obviously un-*

Italian poll). It was Columbus, Ohio, lady, but you see, to go with the monkey and the organ, one has to talk some sort of Dago, and look the part.

MOLLY. How funny! Are many organ men made up like you?

MICHAEL ANGELO. Couldn't say, I'm sure. Never spoke to but one in my life and he was the genu-*ine* article, all right, I guess. I wasn't wise to a word he was jabbering, but Michael here went nuts on it. Still, Michael never saw Italy either, until I took him there two years back.

MOLLY. Then your real name isn't Michael Angelo Romano, I suppose, and the monkey isn't named after you.

MICHAEL ANGELO. Sure thing not, ma'am. My name's Jim Smith. I bought Michael at the Denver Zoo, when he was three months old. He's Michael, straight enough. I named him that because monkeys always seem to me about half Eytalian and half Irish. The crazy part of 'em is Eytalian, and the funny part, that's partly sad too, is the Irish. When Michael's funny I call him Mike. Don't he look like he was mourning the sorrows of old Erin this minute, and yet he makes you smile too?

MOLLY. Which one do you like best—Michael or Mike? (*Suddenly remembers something.*) Did you say your name was Smith? (*Aside.*) Did he say John or Jim? Did Bob say John or Jim? He always calls his friend Smith. Oh, dear!

MICHAEL ANGELO (*who has been adjusting the organ and monkey*). I sure did, ma'am, and I meant it. And I sure like Mike best. Dagoes is just crazy persons to me, but I love the Irish for the wit they have on a rainy day.

MOLLY. You said you were in Denver. Did you ever herd sheep in Wyoming?

MICHAEL ANGELO (*chuckles*). Once, for two days. Speaking of crazy persons, sheep is sure that. Are you a westerner, ma'am?

MOLLY. No, oh no! But my husband has lived

west a little. He was out there once with a man named Smith.

MICHAEL ANGELO. They're average common there, same as here. I had an awfully nice kid with me that trip when I bought Michael. (*MOLLY starts visibly.*) We have come a long ways together since then, haven't we, Mike? And we'd better be going along on our road, ma'am, instead of loitering around here, taking your time and wasting an hour of our own daylight.

MOLLY (*plunging*). Where are you planning to stay to-night? Do hotels take in monkeys?

MICHAEL ANGELO. No—I don't suppose they do, lady, but you see I make a lot of friends in this world as I go along, and Mike's the same. Where will we stay to-night? Oh, we'll just push on till dark, and then we'll look around and see where we are and act accordin'. (*Adjusts cap and shortens monkey's cord. Looks around the room.*) Nice little place you've got here, ma'am. (*Looks at floor.*) Nice rugs. I've seen them things made. Ever been out in the real East, ma'am?

MOLLY. No, I have never been anywhere, much. Won't you sit down? My husband will be home soon now. He'll like to talk to you about—about the sheep herding and the Syrian rug makers. He thinks I'm silly about monkeys and hand-organs, but he's just exactly as silly about the summer he herded sheep in Wyoming with his friend Mr. Smith. Do sit down!

MICHAEL ANGELO (*looks at his shabby shoes and dusty clothes*). I'm not much to sit down in a room like this, lady. You mean it? (*MOLLY nods.*) Not many like you would—I don't blame 'em either—not in my case. I ought to be in better business. (*Sits down.*)

MOLLY. It's interesting doing a lot of different things, isn't it?

MICHAEL ANGELO. Yes, lady, it is. When I talk to some fat, prosperous, prominent citizen who thinks he knows it all, and his townfolk think so too—and I find he don't know much of anything and has seen and done and felt still less, then I'm glad I came from a

stock of rolling stones. They called my father that: Rolling Stone Smith, and my grandfather they called Vagabond Smith. Oh, it's in the blood—we're all born wanderers.

MOLLY (*sighs*). I think I should like to be a wanderer—in the spring anyhow.

MICHAEL ANGELO. Now you've said it, ma'am! Youth and spring and the open road. Well, my granddad settled down at fifty and my father did the same and each made a comfortable fortune. I've heard my brother has come home and broken into business—and gone our dad and our granddad one better.

MOLLY. And will you try to go him one better?

MICHAEL ANGELO. I don't know—I can't tell. I could never love money, but it's useful—very useful. I've often wished, running around as I have among those who haven't got it, that I had more to give. Small things make the poor so happy.

(*Gestures unconsciously at the rug.*)

MOLLY (*perfectly sure she has caught her fish*). Like that little rug—oh, but that's not really a little thing, Mr. Smith! It's a very valuable thing.

MICHAEL ANGELO. A rich man would ignore its beauty, because he could buy the old masterpiece from which it's copied. Besides—yes, it's been torn and mended. See?

MOLLY (*stoutly*). I never noticed! I don't care either. I like it better that way.

MICHAEL ANGELO. The price of that little torn rug often means life or death to a poor man. Yes, I suppose, when I haven't the wanderlust to fill my soul with joy, I must go at the regular job of money-grubbing. I fancy I share the family talent. I've bought a few odd lots in my travels that looked to me to be good bargains. A field in Oklahoma, for instance, and a hillside in Wyoming—oil and silver. I must go and look at my belongings again with the eye of a money-grubber. Perhaps one of them will settle the difficult question of where I'm to live, now that I'm to live

in one place. Respectability—money-grubbing—that means traveling by trains. What do you say, Michael? I can't take you along. Shall I give you to another knight of the road—you and the organ—or shall it be a short life and a merry one for you, and so no risk of a bad master? Or shall I ——

MOLLY. Oh, let me keep him—please let me—if Bob —— (*Key rattles in lock.*) Here's Bob now. He'll be so glad to see you! (*Enter BOB.*) Oh, Bob, see what I've ——

BOB. Hello, little girl. See what I've ——
TOGETHER. Got for you!

(*BOB stares at the organ grinder with the American head, at the organ and the monkey. MOLLY is fascinated by the sleek, well-groomed gentleman behind BOB, who, in his turn, is fascinated by MOLLY.*)

MOLLY. Bob, this is Mr. Smith—Mr. James Smith. Oh, Bob, did you say James or John? Well, if he isn't the right one, he's certainly his double. He's done all the proper things.

BOB. Glad to know you, Mr. Smith. But here's *the* Mr. Smith, Molly. Smith, this is my wife. He came to the office, Molly—pretends he was afraid to face you alone.

MOLLY (*shaking hands*). How absurd! But I thought you said—I've been entertaining probable Smiths all the afternoon, Mr. Smith, because Bob said you might be anyone who came—I mean anyone who came here might be you, no matter how queer they looked nor what they did for—a—a—living.

JOHN SMITH. Not now, Mrs. Molly, not now. I'm not "Off Again Smith" any longer. A man can't spend his whole life getting facts to live by—not if he's a real man. We Smiths all aim to be that. My adventures are over now. (*To MICHAEL ANGELO.*) I've often thought of trying a street organ, but I'm no hand at picking up a foreign lingo—or a foreign manner. I tried one such stunt, but I had to pull it off without

talking—that was dull. I could understand the other fellows all right, but I couldn't talk back. Now, my brother Jim, when he was twenty, he claimed to talk fourteen languages and dialects. Got a job in the consular service on his languages.

MICHAEL ANGELO. Did he make good there—your brother Jim?

JOHN SMITH. He quit—just vamoosed one day into thin air. You see, sir, I belong to a family of vagabonds. They called my granddad "Vagabond Smith" and my father was "Rolling Stone" and I was "Off Again Smith." They both settled down at last, and so have I. I've tried to trace Jim—two brothers ought not to lose sight of one another. Jim always claimed he hated the vagabond strain—he took after my mother. She was an Adams of Beacon Hill. But somehow I think it got him in the end. He quit his job and disappeared the year she died.

MOLLY (*too full of all her mistakes to be sure of anything*). Mr. John Smith, please look hard at Mr. Jim Smith. He belongs to a vagabond tribe of Smiths too. He told me so.

MICHAEL ANGELO. I haven't gone around blabbing about it, Johnny. She—well, she's different herself; she likes monkeys. And she don't shy at old clothes and broken shoes. So I talked to her.

JOHN SMITH. I say—are you—you are! Jim! My kid brother Jim! (*To MOLLY.*) You thought he was Bob's old friend? You weren't so far wrong either—blood tells, especially in our end of the Smith family. And so you like monkeys, do you, Mrs. Molly, and adventure, and don't mind old clothes and broken shoes? Very few women are like that. Very few are the kind a stranger can walk in on and sit down and feel at home with,—fewer even than men. I needn't have tracked Bob down, and spent an hour in the company of a dumb office-boy, waiting for Bob to be through with his day's work. May I ask, ma'am, you weren't, by any chance, born a Smith? My, Jim, seems like a miracle—her keeping you here for me!

MOLLY. No. But I had a great-grandmother Smith.

BOB. Don't forget that you also went to Smith College, young lady. I've told Smith about the committee meeting you missed on his account.

MOLLY. Oh, Bob, you shouldn't have done that! It didn't matter.

BOB (*to the SMITHS*). Isn't that just like a woman? Hates to have the subject of getting money mentioned. Loves to spend it.

JOHN SMITH (*shakes fingers warningly at BOB*). See here, my boy, don't you say too much. You ain't a Smith, nor even the great-grandson of a Smith *and* a graduate of Smith College. I tried to educate you a bit Smith fashion, but you notice it took Mrs. Molly to find me Jim.

(*Bell rings. BOB opens door on CHARLES AUGUSTUS.*)

BOB. Good-evening.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. The same to you, sir, and many of 'em. Is the little lady—(*sees MOLLY*) oh, here she is! All serene again? No more fires or floods or domestic cataclysms? I decided, Mrs.—(*consults his cuff ostentatiously*) e-er—Evans, that I really couldn't leave town without an apology for desertin' you as I did, in a great crisis. You see, the fact is some piker was starting off with my car. I happened to see the skunk tuning her up and I ran down and nabbed him just in time. Then the inevitable details— (*Waves impressively.*)

MOLLY (*acidly sweet*). You have great presence of mind, Mr. Smith. You didn't forget your sample vacuum cleaner.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Business, Mrs.—e-er— (*consults cuff again*) Evans, just business, not to lose sight of—e-er—my daily bread. I hope you didn't worry about its sudden disappearance.

MOLLY. I naturally wanted a chance to try it out, after all the time I'd wasted talking to you.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Ain't she cutting? You score,

Mrs. Evans. I'll give you a day's use of that vac. or my name ain't Smith.

JOHN SMITH. *Is your name Smith?*

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Smith has that honor.

(Low bow.)

JOHN SMITH. Then you deliver to this lady the best vacuum cleaner on the market and get my check. *(Hands his card.)* Understand?

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Now you're talking. I'll be round to-morrow at nine A. M. with the snappiest little vac. in the U. S. A. All attachments. No limit to what it can do. Satisfaction guaranteed. Try it out on the monkey.

(Phone rings wildly. MOLLY answers.)

MOLLY. Hello! Oh, good-evening, Mr. Smith. What? I thought you told Mr. Smith—the other one—that the landlord made repairs. Oh, well, perhaps Sadie is a little hard on things. You thought this afternoon that she was breaking up housekeeping? I don't understand. Oh, those dishes! Well, accidents will happen. I don't see why you call up to tell me disagreeable things about my maid—not my regular maid either. Your bill? Why, send it to my husband of course. To-night? We're entertaining guests. Just a minute. *(Hand over receiver.)* Bob, the plumber wants to speak to you.

BOB. What plumber?

MOLLY. The one who fixed the faucet. Oh, I haven't told you about the flood we had this afternoon.

JIM SMITH. Flood of Smiths?

MOLLY. No, this was an extra caused by the carelessness of a non-Smith, Mr. Jim. Mr. Smith—that one *(waves at CHARLES AUGUSTUS)* got me a plumber.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS. Named Smith.

BOB. Well, what does he want of me to-night?

MOLLY. His pay apparently. He says — *(Into 'phone.)* Just a minute, Mr. Smith. I'm explaining to my husband. No, not to Mr. Smith. Yes, he is

here, but that's no business of — Do you prefer to speak to him? (*Hand over receiver.*) Suspicious, horrid old thing! He insists, because you said we were Smiths, when you tried to make him hurry, that—that —

JIM SMITH. It takes all kinds of people to spell the name Smith.

CHARLES AUGUSTUS (*loftily*). Let me talk to him. (*Strides to 'phone.*) Hello, hello! That you, Smith? This is Charlie—Charlie Smith. Say, old top, don't you know a joke when it hits you in the bean? This one hit you in the pocketbook? That's good. How much does it stand you in? Business is business? Sure thing it is. (*Suddenly serious.*) To tell you the honest truth, old man, I'm awful afraid of water—always have been. When that pipe exploded, I had visions of drowning, and maybe I got a bit reckless. But honest to goodness, old top, what's a good name like Smith for if you don't trade on it when you get in a hole? Well, now do we part friends? You're o. k., Smith. I'll tell the world so. Want to speak to Mr. — e-er (*consults cuff*) Evans? Sure, he'll send you a check. Four thirty-nine is the total, is it? He'll send you a check in the morning, and if he don't I will. Just sold the little lady a vac., with all attachments. So long, John—Jim—Joe! Thanks for the tip, old man. Sweet dreams! (*Hangs up receiver and faces company blandly.*) Well, I guess I'll call it a day—some day at that, eh, little lady? Found your wrench all right, didn't you, Mrs. Evans? Then I guess we're even. Good-night, all! (*Opens doors and careens into MISS JONES-SMITH in the hallway.*) I beg pardon. Why, hello, Kittie Smith!

(*Exit.*)

MISS JONES-SMITH (*impressively*). Jones-Smith, Charlie.

JOHN SMITH (*interested, to BOB*). She's got two big tribes back of her. That's too much!

MISS JONES-SMITH. Good-evening, Mrs. Evans.

I find I'm leaving town sooner than I thought, and I couldn't bear to disappoint you about those books, so, as usual, I'm combining business with pleasure—turning a little before-supper stroll into a call to learn if you and your dear husband have decided among all the treasures I offered you.

MOLLY. I haven't even consulted my husband yet, Miss Jones-Smith. But really, we have so many things to buy just now, I think we'd better wait for the books. Next time you're in the neighborhood, perhaps —

JOHN SMITH. Did she have some *real* books, Mrs. Molly?

MOLLY (*nods*). They were lovely, but —

JOHN SMITH. Bring 'em around, then, and get a check. (*Hands her his card.*)

MISS JONES-SMITH. Oh, thank you! How delightful! Which shall it be, my dear? Kipling or Stevenson or Shakespeare or dear Dickens for the shelves, or Keats—a flash of divinely blue levant for the table?

JOHN SMITH. Bring 'em all, madam, if they're real books—but on one condition. The Smith family ought to be good enough backing for any woman. Drop that Jones.

MISS JONES-SMITH. Oh, but the hyphen is so refined! (*Considers.*) It's a big order—a record-breaker! I'll do it. You may expect the books in a week, dear Mrs. Evans—real treasures, every one!

(*Exit.*)

MOLLY. Bob, please don't let him give us so many things!

JOHN SMITH. What's money for, my dear, to a real man, except to spend?

JIM SMITH. This makes me wish I'd settled down sooner, Mrs. Evans. Anyhow, Mike and I are going to give you the day's catch—and here's wishing it were more—to buy you a wedding present.

(*Enter SADIE, hanging on to door, and eyeing Michael awesomely.*)

JOHN SMITH. Another Smith, eh?

SADIE. *De potats* dey all one mash. De water he all gone. De dinner I no see. I eat toast. I eat potats. Now you pay me. I go out—back way. (*Michael wiggles. SADIE raises her voice to a scream.*) That's all!

(*Exit.*)

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A SURPRISE PARTY AT BRINKLEY'S. An Entertainment in One Scene, by **WARD MACAULEY**. Seven male and seven female characters. Interior scene, or may be given without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time, one hour. By the author of the popular successes, "Graduation Day at Wood Hill School," "Back to the Country Store," etc. The villagers have planned a birthday surprise party for Mary Brinkley, recently graduated from college. They all join in jolly games, songs, conundrums, etc., and Mary becomes engaged, which surprises the surprisers. The entertainment is a sure success.

JONES VS. JINKS. A Mock Trial in One Act, by **EDWARD MUMFORD**. Fifteen male and six female characters, with supernumeraries if desired. May be played all male. Many of the parts (members of the jury, etc.) are small. Scene, a simple interior; may be played without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time of playing, one hour. This mock trial has many novel features, unusual characters and quick action. Nearly every character has a funny entrance and laughable lines. There are many rich parts, and fast fun throughout.

THE SIGHT-SEEING CAR. A Comedy Sketch in One Act, by **ERNEST M. GOULD**. For seven males, two females, or may be all male. Parts may be doubled, with quick changes, so that four persons may play the sketch. Time, forty-five minutes. Simple street scene. Costumes, modern. The superintendent of a sight-seeing automobile engages two men to run the machine. A Jew, a farmer, a fat lady and other humorous characters give them all kinds of trouble. This is a regular gatling-gun stream of rollicking repartee.

THE CASE OF SMYTHE VS. SMITH. An Original Mock Trial in One Act, by **FRANK DUMONT**. Eighteen males and two females, or may be all male. Plays about one hour. Scene, a county courtroom; requires no scenery; may be played in an ordinary hall. Costumes, modern. This entertainment is nearly perfect of its kind, and a sure success. It can be easily produced in any place or on any occasion, and provides almost any number of good parts.

THE OLD MAIDS' ASSOCIATION. A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by **LOUISE LATHAM WILSON**. For thirteen females and one male. The male part may be played by a female, and the number of characters increased to twenty or more. Time, forty minutes. The play requires neither scenery nor properties, and very little in the way of costumes. Can easily be prepared in one or two rehearsals.

BARGAIN DAY AT BLOOMSTEIN'S. A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by **EDWARD MUMFORD**. For five males and ten females, with supers. Interior scene. Costumes, modern. Time, thirty minutes. The characters and the situations which arise from their endeavors to buy and sell make rapid-fire fun from start to finish.

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YOUNG DOCTOR DEVINE. A Farce in Two Acts, by MRS. E. J. H. GOODFELLOW. One of the most popular plays for girls. For nine female characters. Time in playing, thirty minutes. Scenery, ordinary interior. Modern costumes. Girls in a boarding-school, learning that a young doctor is coming to vaccinate all the pupils, eagerly consult each other as to the manner of fascinating the physician. When the doctor appears upon the scene the pupils discover that the physician is a female practitioner.

SISTER MASONS. A Burlesque in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For eleven females. Time, thirty minutes. Costumes, fantastic gowns, or dominoes. Scene, interior. A grand expose of Masonry. Some women profess to learn the secrets of a Masonic lodge by hearing their husbands talk in their sleep, and they institute a similar organization.

A COMMANDING POSITION. A Farcical Entertainment, by AMELIA SANFORD. For seven female characters and ten or more other ladies and children. Time, one hour. Costumes, modern. Scenes, easy interiors and one street scene. Marian Young gets tired living with her aunt, Miss Skinflint. She decides to "attain a commanding position." Marian tries hospital nursing, college settlement work and school teaching, but decides to go back to housework.

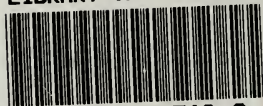
HOW A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET. A Comedy in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For ten female characters. Time, half an hour. Scene, an easy interior. Costumes, modern. Mabel Sweetly has just become engaged to Harold, but it's "the deepest kind of a secret." Before announcing it they must win the approval of Harold's uncle, now in Europe, or lose a possible ten thousand a year. At a tea Mabel meets her dearest friend. Maude sees Mabel has a secret, she coaxes and Mabel tells her. But Maude lets out the secret in a few minutes to another friend and so the secret travels.

THE OXFORD AFFAIR. A Comedy in Three Acts, by JOSEPHINE H. COBB and JENNIE E. PAINE. For eight female characters. Plays one hour and three-quarters. Scenes, interiors at a seaside hotel. Costumes, modern. The action of the play is located at a summer resort. Alice Graham, in order to chaperon herself, poses as a widow, and Miss Oxford first claims her as a sister-in-law, then denounces her. The onerous duties of Miss Oxford, who attempts to serve as chaperon to Miss Howe and Miss Ashton in the face of many obstacles, furnish an evening of rare enjoyment.

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